

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY

INFO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 015072

PANAMA FOR RSS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC

SUBJECT: TRANSFER OF FULLY ARMORED CAR TO BUENOS AIRES

REF: STATE 10566, BRASILIA 496

1. DEPT. APPRECIATES BRASILIA'S AND RIO'S THOUGHTFUL EXAMINATION OF CONSEQUENCES RESULTING FROM TRANSFER OF FULLY ARMORED CAR FROM RIO TO BUENOS AIRES. DEPT. ALSO APPRECIATES CONGEN DISCONTINUING USE OF FOLLOW CAR AND ATTENDANT PERSONNEL AS ECONOMY MEASURE DURING THIS PERIOD OF DIRE ARA BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS.

2. WEIGHING THE RELATIVE LEVELS OF THREAT IN BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA IN THE LIGHT OF INFORMATION PRESENTLY AVAILABLE, THE DEPT. CONCLUDES THAT THE FULLY ARMORED CAR SHOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO B.A. AS PROPOSED IN STATE 10566.

3. THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF A FULLY ARMORED VEHICLE IS TO
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PROVIDE PROTECTION AGAINST AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT DURING

THE MOVEMENT OF A PRINCIPAL. AN ARMORED CAR ALONE DOES NOT PROVIDE SUBSTANTIALLY BETTER DEFENSE AGAINST A KIDNAPPING ATTEMPT THAN A SEMI-ARMORED VEHICLE. THE DEPT. IS OF THE VIEW THAT THE BEST DEFENSE AGAINST A KIDNAPPING THREAT CONSISTS OF (A) REDUCTION OF EXPOSURE TIME, (B) AVOIDING CONSISTENT PATTERNS OF MOVEMENT, AND (C) SAFETY IN NUMBERS.

4. IN THE LIGHT OF THE FOREGOING AND RIO'S THOUGHTFUL ASSESSMENT PROVIDED IN BRASILIA'S 496, THE EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO CONSIDER TRANSFERRING THE SECURITY FOLLOW CAR TO RIO FOR THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER'S USE AND RE-ESTABLISHING THE FOLLOW CAR AND PROTECTIVE DETAIL WHICH WERE ELIMINATED RECENTLY IN THE INTEREST OF ECONOMY. THE EMBASSY SHOULD ADVISE THE DEPT PROMPTLY OF THE ADDITIONAL COST OF THESE SERVICES AND IN SO DOING, SHOULD CONSIDER WHETHER THE NEIGHBORHOOD SWEEP CAR, REFERRED TO IN PARA 6 OF BRASILIA'S 496, COULD BE CONVERTED TO PERSONAL SECURITY DETAIL, AUGMENTED AS NECESSARY BY ADDITIONAL POLICE OFFICERS. THE DEPT'S CLEAR INTENT IS TO PROVIDE THOROUGHLY ADEQUATE PROTECTION FOR THE CONSUL GENERAL IN RIO WHILE AT THE SAME TIME SERVING THE NEEDS IN BUENOS AIRES. KISSINGER

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